besides abolishing 44 posts of Directors and below and 1675 posts in the Currency and Coinage Division which were targeted to be accomplished by July, 2001;

(b) the present status of the exercise if completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASHEB VIKHE PATIL); (a) and (b) One post of Special Secretary has been abolished and another post of Special Secretary has been downgraded to the level of Additional Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs. The incumbent of the post of Chief Commissioner (NRI & Investment), a Secretary level post, has been transferred and the post is kept vacant pending approval of the proposal for restructuring of the India Investment Centre. In addition, one post at the level of Additional Secretary, two posts at the level of Joint Secretary and 39 posts at the level of Director and below have been abolished. Abolition of the remaining 5 posts below Director level is also under consideration. In the Currency and Coinage Division, 1698 posts have been abolished.

(c) Does not arise.

Import duty on maize

3920. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR :

SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are planning to increase import duty on maize; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : (a) No Sir. There is no proposal to increase import duty on maize at present.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Condition of public and private sector banks

†3921. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the condition of Public and Private Sector Banks has constantly been deteriorating;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether it is mainly attributed to industrial slump;

(c) if not, what are the other reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government propose to ameliorate the present condition of Public Sector Banks; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL) : (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that the aggregate assets of the public sector banks have registered increase during the last few years and the Capital to Risk-weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) of these banks has also recorded marginal increase. The gross advances of the public sector banks have also registered increase and their net non-performing assets (NPAs) have declined. The overall profitability of the public sector banks as reflected by the Return On Assets (RoA) has been decreasing on account of thinning interest spread. Increase in staff expenses on account of increased VRS expenditure also accounted for lower profitability of public sector banks during 2000-2001.

The growth of aggregate assets of the Old Private Banks (OPBs) had declined as also their CRAR, though the overall CRAR at 12.01% was above the industry average. The OPBs registered high accretion to their NPAs during the year 2000-2001 and their ROA had also decreased on account of lower rise in operating profit and increase in non-earning assets. Despite lower profitability, the cost income ratio of OPBs has improved during 2000-2001 reflecting higher efficiency in controlling operating costs.

The aggregate assets of the New Private Banks (NPBs) had increased, whereas their CRAR declined during the year ended March, 2001. The NPAs of NPBs have also been showing rising trend during the last few years.

(d) and (e) The Public Sector Banks are taking several steps to increase their profitability which include rationalizing their branch network, abolition of zonal offices, reduction of NPAs, lowering costs of deposits, increasing productivity etc.